



Clear Creek Vista Trail



FEATURES

- 2.43 miles one way, shade and sun on upper slope
- Difficulty level: moderate
- Elevation 1250 to 1650 feet
- Mining history, including remnants of the El Dorado Mine
- Connects with Mill Creek and Camden Water Ditch Trails

TRAIL HEAD DIRECTIONS

Starting at the Whiskeytown Visitor Center, drive west on Highway 299 to the Camden Historic District parking lot, approximately 8 miles. At the end of the parking lot follow the paved trail, over the Clear Creek Footbridge and then turn left. Walk along the white fence and cross over the next bridge. Follow the dirt road past the Tenant Farmhouse and barn. Continue on past the El Dorado Mine site.

Look to the left for trail head signs. There are two branches to this trail, both cross the creek. The first is up slope a few hundred yards past the El Dorado Mine. A few hundred yards farther, the second also crosses over the creek, following the powerline access road up the hill. Either can be used and rejoin mid slope at the flat water ditch portion of the trail.

TRAIL DESCRIPTION

The now level path follows the water ditch past an old mine with some tracks, support beams and some sheet metal remaining. As it continues, the trail overlooks the Camden Historic District and then winds around the hill, paralleling Clear Creek and Highway 299.

Look across the valley and notice the effects of the French Fire of August 2004, which burned over 10,000 acres. Historically, wildland fire was part of the natural sequence of events that burned through areas like this every 20 – 30 years, leaving both destruction and renewal. While most of the destruction has already happened, the renewal started with winter rains and continues into the future.

The trail forks, both forks end at Carr Powerhouse Road. The left fork is signed as the trail and

descends down switchbacks reaching a trailhead. Continue following the dirt road until reaching the paved road and the Clear Creek Bridge. The right fork is relatively level trail until the remains of an old road comes in from the right. The trail rapidly loses altitude. The remains of another old road enter once again from the right. The trail ends on the paved road. Turn left and follow the road to the Clear Creek Bridge.

Highway 299 is to the left, or east of the Clear Creek Bridge.

1850s photo of Camden Historic District.

Try to find this view along the Clear Creek Vista Trail.





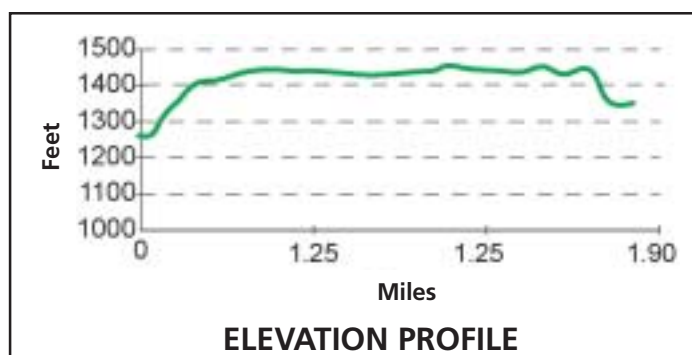
Remnants of railroad track once used to haul ore from the mine shaft on the Clear Creek Vista Trail. Mill Creek trail is below.

Mining History

As with many of the other trails at Whiskeytown, this trail follows both access roads and old water ditches. Miners needed water to process the gold rich rock ore from their mines. When it was determined that it would be easier or cheaper to bring the water to the mine, a water ditch was built.

These water ditches solved the dilemma of a year-round water supply necessary for mining operations.

The long flat portion of this trail follows one of those water ditches. While the history of many of these ditches has been lost, the park is continuing to research and survey old water ditches, including this one.



Watch out for poison oak along the trail. "Leaves of three, let it be", refers to the three lobes on each side of the leaf that distinguish the plant.